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ABSTRACT

In 1990, a study was conducted of 10 Southern California community colleges to determine the effect of a 1978 tax reform/limitation initiative (Proposition 13) on the funding and scope of their community service programs. The study involved a review of community services literature, an examination of relevant college records, and interviews with community college presidents, Board of Trustee members, deans or directors of community service programs, and a survey of community service faculty. The study utilized a case method approach, and data were collected and collated on a college-by-college basis. In general, findings obtained from college records and documents showed that most of the colleges had, as a result of Proposition 13, decreased their community service program offerings to some extent. In addition, the passage of Proposition 13 caused a shift in funding sources from tax support to user fees or user fees supplemented with funds generated through swap meets, facility rentals, or other activities. About 50% of the colleges showed either no change or an increase in their community service program budget. Over 70% of the colleges showed a marked change in the nature of community service courses since 1978, with emphasis on programs that paid their own way and business- and industry-related curricula. Interview data indicated that obtaining funding required more innovative thinking on the part of administrators, and the faculty survey revealed a feeling of disenfranchisement because of low pay and no benefits, little input into program planning, and loss of status. The interview schedule and survey instrument are included. (JMC)

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